

## OPINION 1094

REFUSAL OF REQUEST TO CORRECT CERTAIN NAMES ON  
THE OFFICIAL LIST OF FAMILY-GROUP NAMES IN  
ZOOLOGY

RULING.- The application for correction of eight family-group names on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology is hereby refused.

## HISTORY OF THE CASE Z.N.(S.) 1965

An application for the correction of eight names on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology was first received from Mr George C. Steyskal (*c/o U.S. National Museum, Washington, D.C.*) on 15 April 1971. After discussions with the Commission's classical adviser it was sent to the printer on 12 January 1972 and published on 1 May 1972 in *Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 29: 26-27. No use of the plenary powers was involved.

The application was opposed by Dr Theresa Clay (*Bull.* vol. 29: 199), Mr P.E.S. Whalley and Dr K.S.O. Sattler, all of the *British Museum (Natural History)*, London, and by Dr J. Franclemont (*Cornell University*) and Dr E.G. Munroe (*Agriculture Canada, Ottawa*) for PYRALIDAE. Other comments were received from Dr C.W. Sabrosky and Dr Eugene Eisenmann. Dr Steyskal's reply was published in *Bull.* vol. 31: 113-114.

## DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

On 23 February 1977 the members of the Commission were invited to vote under the Three-Month Rule on Voting Paper (1977)2 either for or against the proposals set out in *Bull. zool. Nom.*, vol. 29: 26-27. At the close of the voting period on 23 May 1977 the state of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative votes - nine (9) received in the following order: Melville, Holthuis, Lemche, Vokes, Alvarado, Rohdendorf, Sabrosky, Corliss, Dupuis (in part)

Negative votes - fourteen (14) received in the following order: Eisenmann, Mroczkowski, Willink, Heppell, Tortonese, Bayer, Kraus, Brinck, Binder, Starobogatov, Ride, Dupuis (in part), Nye, Habe, Cogger.

Dr Welch returned a late affirmative vote. No voting paper was returned by M. Bernardi.

The following comments were sent in by members of the Commission with their voting papers:

*Holthuis*: In carcinology many generally adopted incorrectly spelled family names (e.g. NEPHROPSIDAE, POTAMONIDAE, THALASSOCARIDAE, etc.) have been corrected (to NEPHROPIDAE, POTAMIDAE, THALASSOCARIDIDAE, etc.) without any confusion resulting thereby. Keeping strictly to the rules usually works out best in the end.

*Eisenmann*: I agree in principle that names on the Official List should not be changed simply for linguistic reasons (correction of authorship and date is another matter). I particularly object to the proposal to change the avian name THRAUPIDAE (*universally* used) to THRAUPIDIDAE.

*Lemche*: But I feel it should be clearly indicated that this decision is a *correction* to something already on the List.

*Mroczkowski*: I think that names on the Official List should not be changed. Nomenclature requires stability.

*Sabrosky*: I believe that errors should be corrected even when they occur in Official Lists, unless the relevant Opinion specifically dealt with the spelling of the family name and decided it under the plenary powers.

*Bayer*: Although I am in complete agreement with the classical justification for this proposal, I have to oppose it on the ground that Official Lists are meaningless if names once placed on them are subject to alteration. These names, right or wrong, have been placed on the list, and they should stay there.

*Kraus*: Unfortunately the barbarisms in the formation of these family-group names were discovered too late. Even if we did not have Article 29d of the Code, stability of the Official Lists seems to be much more important than philological aspects.

*Corliss*: It is something like calling for a quorum when you know there is not one: if the request is made it cannot be denied. In the present case I should have preferred to 'let sleeping dogs lie'; but once the question has been raised I believe that we are obliged to heed it and to vote in favour of accuracy and precision (and thus correction as indicated) in the orthography of the names involved.

*Ride*: If particular examples cause problems, separate applications should be made concerning them by specialists in the groups. The case submitted is not alone sufficient for a change in earlier decisions.

*Dupuis*: Je vote cas par cas, selon les remarques suivantes:

Je considère - à l'inverse de Miss Clay - que les Opinions de la Commission et les inscriptions correspondantes sur les listes officielles sont toujours révisables en droit.

Si l'ignorance totale de la grammaire latine par la majorité des zoologistes aujourd'hui n'est pas un crime, il est cependant déplorable que ces mêmes zoologistes utilisent à tort et à travers cet instrument, tout en ayant conscience de leur ignorance du mode d'emploi, et il serait diabolique que la Commission, collectivement, partageât cette insouciance. Je suis donc, par principe, favorable aux corrections grammaticales, surtout dans les écrits officiels.

Monsieur Steyskal a raison de souligner (*Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 31: 113-114) que le nouvel alinéa d de l'Article 29 invoquant le 'general current use' constitue une source de divergences d'appréciation et contredit plus ou moins les alinéas précédents. Cet alinéa d semble, au demeurant, dépourvu de valeur juridique car les textes anglais ('general current use') et français ('usage général') ne sont pas équivalents. Au surplus, un nom en usage même absolument général au sein d'un groupe de spécialistes peut-il être répété, de ce seul fait, en usage véritablement général parmi les zoologistes?

Pour l'ensemble de ces raisons, j'incline en faveur des propositions de Steyskal. Cependant, le cas évident d'*Octocyon* qui, comme *Procyon*, exige une exception, montre que les 8 cas devraient être soumis à autant de votes séparés.

Dans l'hypothèse de votes isolés, je vote POUR la proposition Steyskal dans les cas 61 GYROPODIDAE, 139 PYRALIDIDAE, 199 EPISEMATIDAE, 207 TRIOPIDAE, 213 TRETASPIDINAE et 428 THRAUPIDIDAE.

Je vote CONTRE toute modification de 108 OTOCYONIDAE.

Faute d'informations et de termes de comparaison, je m'abstiens quant à 324 TRINOTONIDAE.

Quant à l'appendice de Steyskal concernant *Stenodema* Laporte, je pense que ce nom est du neutre, comme *Eurydema* etc. (cf. Dupuis, 1952, *Bull. Mus. nat. Hist. nat.* (2) vol. 24: 557-561).

### CERTIFICATE

I certify that the votes cast on voting paper (77)2 were cast as set out above, that the proposal contained in that voting paper has been duly rejected, and that the decision so taken, being the decision of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, is truly recorded in the present Opinion No. 1094.

R.V. MELVILLE

Secretary

International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

London

26 July 1977